

Editorial

Changing of the guard: a new IAPA publishing era begins

Angus Morrison-Saunders and Francois Retief

This issue of *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* (IAPA) marks the end of an era; our publisher of the past 13 years, William (Bill) Page of Beech Tree Publishing, is retiring at the end of the year and so this is his last issue. We would like to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the key events during Bill's tenure as publisher and introduce the next phase in IAPA's development.

Prior to the appointment of Beech Tree Publishing in 1998, the journal of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) went by the name 'Impact Assessment Bulletin' and later simply 'Impact Assessment'. Meanwhile Bill Page started and ran a journal called 'Project Appraisal' from 1986. Following a call for tenders to publish IAIA's journal, it was decided to merge the two journals. Thus IAPA was first published in 1998. Some years later, in 2007, in recognition of its origins and the core interests of IAIA, the words 'Impact Assessment' were increased in size in the official logo of the journal so as to be especially prominent.

The original Editor of IAPA was Dan Bronstein from Michigan State University, USA (who had been editor for *Impact Assessment*). He continued until the end of 1999 when the role was taken over by Chris Wood, Manchester University, UK, with Paul Scott as Associate Editor. From January 2001,

Carys Jones (also at Manchester University) and Chris Wood were joint Co-Editors, until Chris Wood retired in September 2005 and Colin Kirkpatrick, also from Manchester University, joined Carys instead. During the 'Manchester' years the focus of the journal was on improving the quality of papers and the inclusion of Practice Reports (now Professional Practice Papers) became a regular inclusion in IAPA. The current Editors assumed the role in May 2009 following an open tendering process coordinated by a Selection Panel of IAIA members.

IAPA Editors are supported by an Editorial Board comprising impact assessment experts in various fields from all around the world; their annual general meeting takes place at the annual IAIA conference. The membership of the IAPA Editorial Board is revised and amended from time to time; the current membership is recorded on the inside cover of hard copies of each issue of the journal as well as on the journal website.

Members of IAIA have always had access to the journal (the cost being included in their membership subscription fee), with hard copies traditionally being mailed out to them on a quarterly basis. The journal has also been made available to libraries. Online publishing of IAPA started in 2000 on Ingenta; IAIA members now can choose whether to receive hard copy, for which there is a small additional charge, or rely solely instead on electronic access to the Ingenta site that is available to all members and library subscribers.

IAPA has the advantage of going to all members of a large international association covering over 100 countries, as well as to many libraries around the world. It is consistently in the top 100 most downloaded publications on Ingenta Connect — out of about 16,000 publications. This is a remarkable achievement.

Angus Morrison-Saunders is 75% at the School of Environmental Science, Murdoch University, Australia, and 25% at the School of Environmental Sciences and Development, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa; Email: a.morrison-saunders@murdoch.edu.au.

Francois Retief is at the School of Environmental Sciences and Development, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa; Email: Francois.Retief@nwu.ac.za.

Since 2010, a pre-print online version of papers has been made available within days of authors making final amendments to their manuscripts; this has meant IAPA readers can access articles well in advance of their formal appearance in a given issue. Finally, as reported in the March 2010 issue of IAPA, Bill Page signed up to an online submission system hosted by Manuscript Central (now called ScholarOne). Anecdotal evidence to date suggests that this has increased the number of submissions to IAPA from 'outside' the IAIA community.

Aside from the academic standing of IAPA, important sustainability thinking has gone into the current design of the hard copy. For example, the A4 (or US Letter equivalent) format was adopted in recognition that this is the paper stock used by most office-based printers and photocopiers, and therefore required fewer sheets of paper for each article photocopied or printed out compared to more common smaller formats used for many scientific journals. Similarly, the journal has always been prepared in black and white format so that figures and images would reproduce clearly in library printers or photocopiers for which black ink has typically been the norm. The paper stock is sourced from 100% post-consumption reclaimed and acid-free paper. Choice of binding using staples rather than glue allowed for claims that glued journals could sometimes not be recycled.

Finally, as a small business operating in the semi-rural community of Guildford, England, Bill has employed local people in copy-editing and proof-reading, typesetting and printing. Over the years, the authors and editors of IAPA have developed excellent working relationships with these staff. The copy-editors — initially, and for many years, Lynn Frances, and now Karin Fancett — have become familiar with impact assessment terminology and, along with Bill, frequently suggest useful minor corrections and improvements to papers in the final stages of the publication process. The typesetter, Hilary Soper, and printer, EntaPrint, have consistently done an excellent job, for which we thank them too.

Always keen to promote IAPA to as broad an audience as possible, Bill Page has readily made hard copies of an entire journal issue available to authors and co-authors whose articles appear within it, as well as multiple offprints of their article. He also allows authors to obtain the electronic version of their own paper (in pdf format) for the purpose of

posting this on personal or departmental websites. All articles older than 24 months are made available on the Ingenta site in open-access; only the recent issues are limited to IAIA members and library subscribers. Finally, Bill has himself been a member of IAIA since the mid-1980s. Along with his wife Gill Page, he would regularly attend annual conferences at which he would have a journal display as well as actively participate in the 'Meet the Editors' sessions held specially for writers interested in learning more about impact assessment journals and the peer-review and publishing process generally.

It is common practice for scientific journals to be run on a double-blind review process, meaning that the identity of authors and peer-reviewers alike are not deliberately disclosed to each other. IAPA is possibly one of the few 'triple-blind' journals in the world — due to a degenerative condition, Bill Page has progressively become blind and engages in electronic communication with the help of an on-screen reader. It is testimony to technology and his passion for publishing that he did not retire when his eyesight faded beyond the ability to read a computer screen some years ago now.

One of Bill's final contributions to IAPA was to provide wise input to the process for selecting a new publisher. A small Taskforce derived from members of the IAPA Editorial Board, chaired by Frank Vanclay and including Rita Hamm, CEO of IAIA, formed in May 2011 at the annual conference in Puebla, Mexico, and invitations were made to major publishing houses to apply to be the new publisher of IAPA. High quality and highly competitive bids were received from six publishing houses; eventually this was whittled down to two and the decision to appoint Taylor & Francis was made in October 2011. The guidance of Bill in this selection process is much appreciated.

The end of one era is of course the beginning of another. As Editors we would like to formally thank Bill Page for all of his contributions over the past 13 years and in particular for the professional and comradely relationship we have had with him over the past few years. At the same time, we look forward to an equally highly productive relationship with the new Taylor & Francis publishing team for the next era of IAPA journal.

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